CLAIMS

We claim:

1.   A method for providing a selection of properties for
5   an electronic document associated with an application program having a
user interface, comprising steps:

determining a context for the electronic document;

determining a status of a property for the electronic
document; and

10   based upon the context of the electronic document and the
status of the property,

creating a palette for the user interface so that the
palette comprises a control for an available property; and

displaying the palette in conjunction with the
15   electronic document on the user interface.

2.   The method of Claim 1, further comprising the steps:

determining a change in the status of the property or the
context of the electronic document;

20   based upon the change of the property or the change in
context of the electronic document,

modifying the palette to reflect the change in the
property or the change in the context of the electronic document; and

replacing the palette with the modified palette so that
25   the modified palette is displayed in conjunction with the electronic
document on the user interface.

3.   The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step
of:

30   sizing the palette so that the palette and the electronic
document can be simultaneously viewed.

4. The method of Claim 2, further comprising the step of:

sizing the modified palette so that the modified palette and the electronic document can be simultaneously viewed.

5. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the steps:

coordinating the palette with a predefined interface so that the palette and the predefined interface provide consistent control features; and

displaying the predefined interface in conjunction with the palette and the electronic document.

6. The method of Claim 2, further comprising the steps:

coordinating the modified palette with a predefined interface so that the palette and the predefined interface provide consistent control features; and

displaying the predefined interface in conjunction with the modified palette and the electronic document.

7. The method of Claim 1, wherein the context of the electronic document consists of at least one of the following: textual content, formatting content, or graphical content.

8. The method of Claim 1, wherein the property consists of one of the following: a formatting command, an application program command, or an electronic document characteristic.

9. The method of Claim 1, wherein the user interface comprises a graphical user interface for an application program.

10. The method of Claim 1, wherein the user interface comprises a floating palette.

11.   The method of Claim 1, wherein the user interface comprises a property browser palette window.

12.   The method of Claim 5, wherein the predefined interface comprises a toolbar.

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13.   The method of Claim 6, wherein the predefined interface comprises a toolbar.

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14. A computer system for providing a selection of formatting properties for an electronic document associated with an application program having a user interface comprising:

a memory for storing a property browser program module; and

a processing unit functionally coupled to the memory for executing computer-executable instructions operable for:

determining a formatting property for an electronic document associated with the application program, wherein the formatting property has at least one control;

determining a context for the electronic document;

creating a palette with the formatting property including at least one control and further based upon the context of the electronic document; and

sending the palette to a user interface associated with the application program.

15. The computer system of Claim 14, wherein the processing unit is further operable for:

determining a change in the status of the property or the context of the electronic document;

based upon the change of the property or the context of the electronic document,

modifying the palette to reflect the change in the property or the change in the context of the electronic document; and

replacing the palette with the modified palette so that the modified palette is displayed in conjunction with the electronic document on the user interface.

16. The computer system of Claim 14, wherein the processing unit is further operable for:

sizing the palette so that the palette and the electronic document can be simultaneously viewed.

17.   The computer system of Claim 15, wherein the processing unit is further operable for:

sizing the modified palette so that the modified palette and the electronic document can be simultaneously viewed.

18.   The computer system of Claim 14, wherein the processing unit is further operable for:

coordinating the palette with a predefined interface so that the palette and the predefined interface provide consistent control features; and

displaying the predefined interface in conjunction with the palette and the electronic document.

19.   The computer system of Claim 15, wherein the processing unit is further operable for:

coordinating the modified palette with a predefined interface so that the palette and the predefined interface provide consistent control features; and

displaying the predefined interface in conjunction with the modified palette and the electronic document.

20.   The computer system of Claim 14, wherein the context of the electronic document consists of at least one of the following: textual content, formatting content, or graphical content.

21.   The computer system of Claim 14, wherein the property consists of one of the following: a formatting command, an application program command, or an electronic document characteristic.

22. The computer system of Claim 18, wherein the user interface comprises a graphical user interface for an application program.

23. The computer system of Claim 18, wherein the user interface comprises a floating palette.

24. The computer system of Claim 18, wherein the user interface comprises a property browser palette window.

25. The computer system of Claim 18, wherein the predefined interface comprises a toolbar.

26. The computer system of Claim 19, wherein the predefined interface comprises a toolbar.

27. A computer system for providing a selection of formatting properties for an electronic document associated with an application program having a user interface comprising:

a memory for storing a property browser program module; and

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a processing unit functionally coupled to the memory, for executing computer-executable instructions operable for:

determining a formatting property for an electronic document associated with the application program, wherein the formatting property has at least one control;

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determining a context for the electronic document;

creating a palette with the formatting property including at least one control and further based upon the context of the electronic document;

sizing the palette so that the palette and the electronic document can be simultaneously viewed;

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sending the palette to a user interface associated with the application program;

determining a change in the status of the property or the context of the electronic document; and

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based upon the change of the property or the context of the electronic document,

modifying the palette to reflect the change in the property or the change in the context of the electronic document;

sizing the modified palette so that the modified palette and the electronic document can be simultaneously viewed; and

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replacing the palette with the modified palette so that the modified palette is displayed in conjunction with the electronic document on the user interface.

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